

Master Moshai



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Harlal had not yet finished his twelfth standard when he was appointed as master for Benugopal or 'Benu'. From the beginning, the two became close. This displeased Benu's mother and she told Harlal to stay away from Benu when he was not teaching him. Offended, Harlal informed the family that he could no longer tutor Benu.



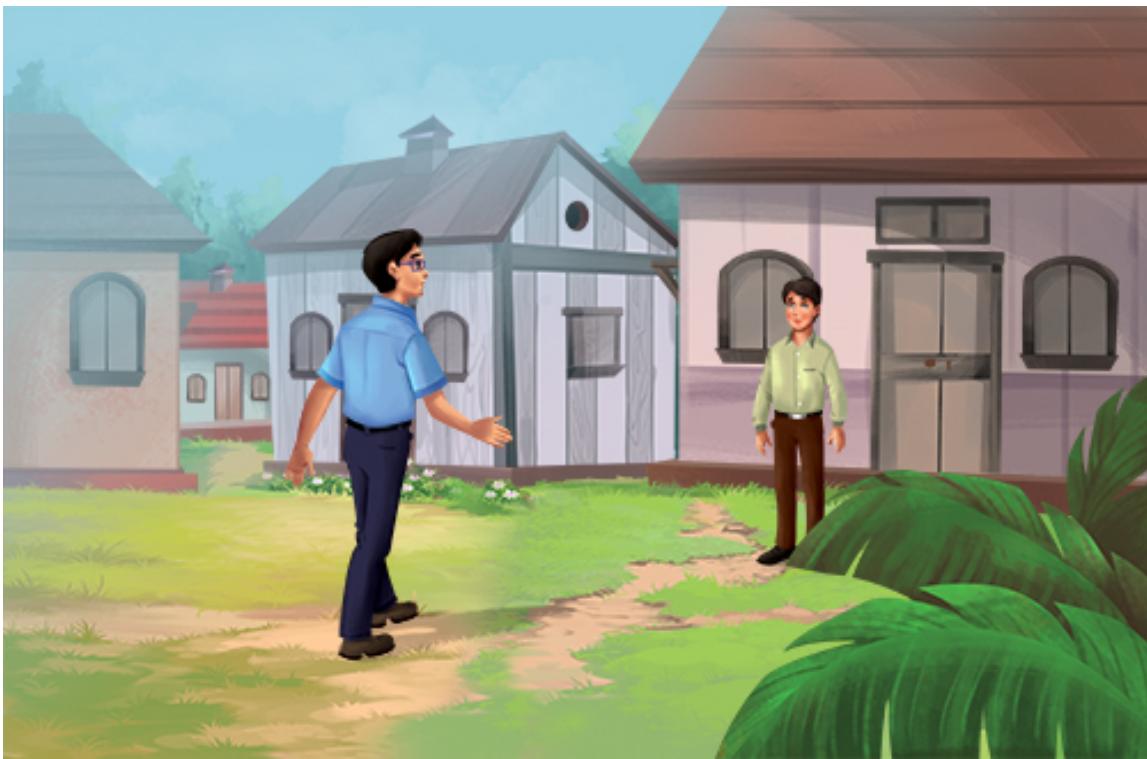
Soon Harlal's poor financial condition forced him to discontinue his graduation. After sometime, an English Manager of a big merchant firm offered him a job of managing cash.

Sometime later, when Benu's mother died, Harlal went to pay his last respects. Their friendship revived and Benu started visiting Harlal for guidance. Soon, Benu entered college.



One late evening, Harlal returned home and found Benu waiting for him. He said that his father was getting married again and that he could not live with him any longer. Benu expressed his desire of going to England.

Surprised, Harlal asked Benu where he would find the money. Benu said that he had hoped Harlal would loan the money from his firm's accounts.



“That money belongs to someone else, but my Manager might be able to help,” assured Harlal.

Benu left but was back two days later.



After dinner, ensuring that his moneybags were safely locked in the cupboard, Harlal went to sleep with the key

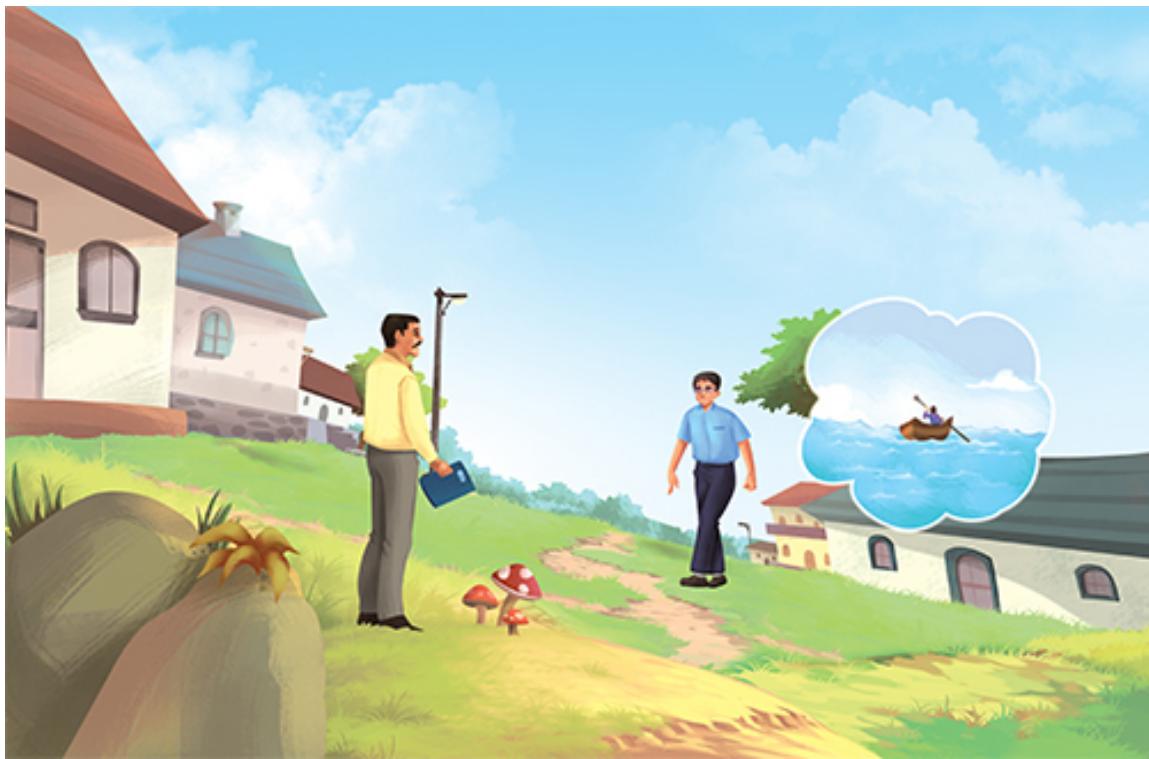
under his pillow. Around midnight, Benu woke him up, handed over some ornaments for safekeeping and left.

Harlal woke up just before dawn after a bad dream. A strange feeling came over him and he decided to check on his money. To his astonishment, he found the bags empty! Inside one of them, were two letters from Benu: one addressed to his father and the other to Harlal.



Benu had mentioned that he had taken the money to go to England and assured that his father would pay Harlal back; in the meantime, the ornaments would cover the amount.

Harlal rushed towards the jetty to stop Benu, but in vain. Dejected, he walked back home and saw his Manager's man waiting for him. "I have lost the money!" he said.



The man took him to the Manager. Harlal said nothing as he could not betray Benu who had trusted him.

The manager said that Harlal would be suspended if the money was not returned in a day. Harlal left the office and called a carriage. Sitting inside, he closed his eyes and a deep peace filled his heart.



After a while, the driver called out impatiently, "Babu Moshai, where do you want to go?" But he did not receive any answer from Harlal...

